

HUMF JOINS CHILDREN'S COMMUNICATION CHARITY I CAN TO LAUNCH CHATTERBOX CHALLENGE 2013!

Submitted by: Playtime PR
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Children's communication charity I CAN (<http://www.ican.org.uk>) is proud to announce that it is partnering with loveable children's brand Humf, from the hit Nick Jr. TV show, with continued support from long-term sponsor Openreach to make the 2013 Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>) even bigger than ever. Aimed at getting under 5s communicating in fun and creative ways, the annual event is open for registration now!

I CAN (<http://www.ican.org.uk>) is inviting thousands of little Chatterboxes to take part in the annual fun and educational event for nurseries, pre-schools, childminding and community groups. Now in its 12th year, the 2013 Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>): Mad Chatter's Tea Party with Humf asks groups to organise sponsored tea parties where children can join in with popular songs and rhymes to develop their communication skills in a simple and enjoyable way. Thanks to the kind support of Openreach, funds raised through sponsorship will enable I CAN (<http://www.ican.org.uk>) to help even more children who struggle to communicate.

Each Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>): Mad Chatter's Tea Party with Humf will raise valuable funds and awareness for I CAN's work with some of the one million children in the UK who struggle with speech, language and communication, as friends and family will be encouraged to sponsor children for taking part and joining in. Groups can register now for their free fundraising pack at the Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>) website (www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk).

The 2013 Challenge signals the beginning of an ongoing relationship between Humf and I CAN (<http://www.ican.org.uk>). This support from a licensed character coincides with the redesign of the popular Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>) to include the tea-party element.

"Tea parties are a fantastic way for young children to learn the social elements of communication, as well as being accessible to all children. Humf is a popular and appealing character for the pre-school aged children the Chatterbox Challenge is aimed at every year," commented Virginia Beardshaw, I CAN (<http://www.ican.org.uk>) Chief Executive. "So we are delighted that Entertainment One agreed to grant us the licence and allow Humf to be the fun face of communication for hundreds of thousands of children throughout the UK. This is in addition to the continued support of Openreach, which enables I CAN (<http://www.ican.org.uk>) to support more children across the UK who struggle to communicate."

Rebecca Harvey, Head of Marketing from Entertainment One said, "It's a pleasure to be involved in I CAN's annual Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>)! We hope the children involved will enjoy their tea party with Humf and we are thrilled to be linking with I CAN on the important issue of children's communication."

Liv Garfield, Chief Executive, Openreach, said, "Communication is at the heart of the Openreach business and we know how important it is for children to develop good communication skills to succeed in life. This is our sixth year sponsoring I CAN's Chatterbox Challenge

(<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>) as part of our 'First Mile' programme. The Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>) is a great way for young children to develop their own speaking and understanding skills whilst helping children who struggle with communication. By sponsoring the Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>), we hope all children will get the best start in life."

Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>) week is 1st – 8th March 2013 and most groups will be holding their Tea Party with Humf during this week, though groups can actually take part at any time during 2013.

As with previous successful years, the singing and rhyming activities for the 2013 Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>): Mad Chatter's Tea Party with Humf have been carefully developed by I CAN speech and language therapists and teachers. The lesson plans, which include Humf and his friends in the activities and illustrations, link to key aspects of the new Early Years Foundation Stage including Communication and Language, Physical Development, and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. All the activities are aimed at supporting and developing children's speech and language skills.

Speech, language and communication are crucial for reading, learning in school, for socialising and making friends, and for understanding and expressing emotions or feelings. 1.2 million children in the UK have long-term difficulties with their speech, language and communication and will need extra support. The Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>): Mad Chatter's Tea Party with Humf encourages children to think about communication, whilst helping support those who find talking and understanding difficult.

Thanks to Openreach and their kind support, I CAN (<http://www.ican.org.uk>) is able to help even more children who struggle to communicate.

To register and get involved in this year's Chatterbox Challenge (<http://www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk>): Mad Chatter's Tea Party with Humf, go to www.chatterboxchallenge.org.uk

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Press contact:

For more information, pictures and interviews, please contact Emma Selim (I CAN Senior Press and PR Officer) on eselim@ican.org.uk or 0207 843 2543

About I CAN:

- I CAN is the children's communication charity. www.ican.org.uk or www.talkingpoint.org.uk
- We are here to ensure that no child is left out or left behind because of a difficulty speaking or understanding.
- Nobody wants a child's potential to be wasted. It happens because communication difficulties are

not visible, often mistaken for something else, or not noticed at all.

- I CAN's mission is to make sure that everyone in contact with children knows how important communication is, what a communication difficulty looks like and what they can do to help.

- We do this through:

- Increasing public awareness of the problems children face.
- Giving expert advice to parents and families about what to look out for and what to do.
- Providing assessments for children so that their families know what support will meet their needs.
- Giving teachers and people working with children the skills to help children who struggle.
- Campaigning to ensure children and families get a better deal.
- Producing resources, DVDs, posters and other information to help parents and practitioners support children with their communication development.

At the very heart of I CAN are our special schools which give expert care and education to children with problems so severe their needs cannot be met elsewhere.

About Openreach:

- Thanks to the support of Openreach, more of the money you raise through the Chatterbox Challenge goes towards helping I CAN support children across the UK that are struggling to communicate.
- Openreach maintains and improves the network that connects tens of millions of homes and businesses to telephone exchanges across the UK. We do so on behalf of our Communications Provider customers, who sell communications-based services to consumers and businesses
- We're also the lead deployment arm of BT's £2.5 billion investment to make Super-fast Fibre Access available to our customers across the UK. Which in turn means that up to two-thirds of UK premises should be able to enjoy super-fast broadband services by the end of 2014.
- With communication at the heart of its business, Openreach is passionate about I CAN's work, and recognises how critical good communication skills are to every young child as they embark on life's journey.
- Learn more about Openreach at www.openreach.co.uk/csr

About Entertainment One:

Entertainment One Ltd. (LSE:ETO) is a leading international entertainment company that specializes in the acquisition, production and distribution of film and television content. The company's comprehensive network extends around the globe including Canada, the U.S., the UK, Ireland, Benelux, France, Germany, Scandinavia, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Through established Entertainment and Distribution divisions, the company provides extensive expertise in film distribution, television and music production, family programming and merchandising and licensing. Its current rights library is exploited across all media formats and includes more than 24,000 film and television titles, 2,700 hours of television programming and 45,000 music tracks.